



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Stop 0248, Room 2625-S
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0248

October 10, 2002

Dear NHTC program participant,

During a review of audit reports and input from various sources it has become apparent that clarification is needed concerning the identification procedures used to enroll calves on ranches approved to operate in the Non Hormone Treated Cattle (NHTC) program. The Livestock and Seed (LS) Program Guide 1, General Requirements for Live Animal Production Dated April 30, 2001 (Guide 1) specifically address identification in Section 6. Guide 1 Section 6.2 states, "Each animal must be identified at the *earliest opportunity* following birth." Guide 1 Section 6.1, Method of Identification is very specific as to the requirements of what is meant by "identification" as it pertains to the NHTC program specifically in Guide 1, Section 6.1.3.1. - 6.1.3.4.

Taking into consideration Guide 1 Section 6, Identification, Livestock and Seed Programs defines "earliest opportunity" as the first time the producer works or handles the calves following birth. That would require the producer to identify the animals using the official NHTC identification at that time, as set forth in Guide 1 Section 6.1. Also, this procedure must be documented in the program's NHTC quality manual.

If further clarification is needed you can contact me at 202-720-1124 or email at James.Riva@usda.gov. Also, ARC Instruction 708 and LS Program Guide 1, Live Animal Production Guidelines can be found at the NHTC program website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/arc/nhtc.htm>.

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